Although a good deal of money was being spent on hospitals and dispensaries, the majority of the poor for whom the institutions were intended were deriving little benefit out of them. More consideration should be shown to them by the staff of the Medical Department.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

137. Suggestions for the improvement of the Public Service.

Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum taluk) asked permission to say one word regarding the remarks of the two Members on official corruption, the previous evening. He dissociated himself from those observations and expressed the country's obligations to the Dewan for rightly explaining the real position of officials and for maintaining the honor of the people from among whom officers below Rs. 100 were recruited.

Dewan.—Quite so. These officers have come from among the people. I know the people of Travancore full well and my opinion is that, viewed from any stand point, they will not be found to be inferior to the people of any other country. If the officers below Rs. 100, as a class, are bad, then it would mean that the people from whom they come are also bad. There is absolutely no foundation for the opinion that the people are bad nor for the allegation that the officers below Rs. 100 are a corrupt lot. I have no doubt that all the people of Travancore will agree in this view.

The Member then requested that, if any officer was proved to have gone astray in any way, he should be severely dealt with.

It was a matter of regret to the Members that Government did not bestow sufficient attention to the several representations made on the general administration of the State or to the working of the Departments, nor were the Members informed of the action taken, if any, on their representations.

The Government in their anxiety to secure efficiency had during the period 1080-89 increased salaries to 110 per cent, the cost of establishments to 135 per cent, and the amount of allowances and supplies and services to 200 per cent. The creation of unnecessary appointments had become common. Though Travancore was only as big as a British Indian District, the number of officers in it was larger. The Member urged that there should be equitable distribution of emoluments. He then went on to explain the disparity in the salaries of Heads of Departments and observed that there was no sense of proportion nor were they regulated by the usual standards of work and responsibility. The differential treatment accorded to the officers was against all principles. The Member contended that there was scope for substantial improvement in that matter. The same was the case in regard to clerical establishments in the Huzur Office and the High Court. The next point urged was the need for equitable rules for the grant of allowances to officers. The articles of the Travancore Service Regulations were being violated and exceptions were very common. Promotions went by fortuitous circumstances because of want of regular gradation. On the same footing was the question of granting honoraria to officers. He could not understand why paid officers should be given honoraria for legitimate work done by them. Closely connected with the above matters was the grant of extension of service to officers. The age-limit provision should be strictly enforced. If necessary, the age-limit might be raised to 60 years, but a rule, when laid down, should always be observed. The Member then complained about the immense power for evil vested in officers by the laws and regulations on the statute book and observed that some of them were an invasion of the people's rights. He then complained about the poor touring work of the District Officers and Heads of Departments in spite of repeated official instructions from Government and pleaded, *inter alia*, for the institution of departmental examinations for promotion.

Much of the so-called official corruption at present took the form of class feeling which, if not arrested immediately, would grow to uncontrollable limits. He was aware that a good deal of what was dealt with by the Member was being discussed in the Vernacular newspapers of the country. The Government should, whenever

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attacks on officers were made in the Press, ask the officer concerned to clear his character, or the newspaper which published the libel should be proceeded against. The way in which the Government responded to communal representation seemed to encourage the existence of caste feeling in regard to appointments. The object with which the Assembly itself was created was defeated when caste or sectarian representation was demanded by the different communities. The Member requested that such a sectarian agitation be stamped out altogether. The appointment of foreigners was, the Member submitted, justifiable only when natives were not available. When such importations were necessary, the larger and wider field of British India should be made the field for recruitment and not the narrower fields of the adjoining British District or Native State.

In conclusion, the Member requested that a Committee might be appointed to inquire into the representations made at the Assembly on the public service and take evidence and submit its report to Government.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

138. Plea for the institution of a Civil Service Examination for Travancore.

Mr. P. A. Abraham B. A., B. L. (Member, Kottayam taluk) said that the object of his representation was to bring about some modification in the manner of filling up appointments. The importance of the subject would be evident from repeated representations in the previous sessions of the Assembly and from frequent discussion of it in the newspapers of the land, in which grave statements were made about the manner of filling up vacancies. Complaints of the kind the Member was referring to were as old as the Assembly. It was a difficult problem for solution. But the complaints being loud, some remedy should be found. What struck the Member as a remedy was the institution of a Civil Service Examination in the same manner as the I. C. S. The chief defect in the existing arrangements was that a qualified young man entering the public service in his 25th year had to wait till he was about 50 years old for the post of a Peishkar or a Division Assistant. In other words, he had no chance of filling a responsible post when he had the necessary mental energy and vigour. Such a gradation of the service was not to the benefit of the State or of the officer concerned. On account of there being no chance for promotion within a reasonable time, several young men with high qualifications had to go outside the State for appointment. If under a system of Civil Service Examination the more brilliant of the natives could be appointed in the service, that would be a distinct advantage to the country.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

139. The removal of all kinds of racial bar in the matter of admission to the Public service and the need for the recognition of equality of civic rights.

Mr. Eapen Geevarghese (Member, Mavelikara taluk) said that the movement demanding civic rights to all classes of His Highness' subjects was one year old and that there were not many who had not become aware of its aims and objects. It was not their desire to deprive any community of its rights and long-established privileges. Their cherished ambition was that they should be given their due without distinction of caste or creed and that Government should recognise the equality of all citizens. He could not understand how they, forming twenty six lakhs of His Highness' subjects composed of Christians, Mahomedans, Ezhavas, Pulayas, Parayas, &c., were considered inferior to the caste Hindus. On the other hand, the Christians were in the forefront in education, the Mahomedans in trade, the Ezhavas in industries and the Pulayas and Parayas in husbandry, on which other landed classes lived. He was sure that the truth of the above facts and statements was being recognised by their several well-wishers and friends from among the caste Hindus. Their chief complaint was their exclusion from the Land Revenue Department. The advocates of the civic rights movement had equal right to know and criticise the management of any department in the State. If it was contended that the amalgamation of Devaswoms with the normal Land Revenue Department was the real cause of the bar to their employment in that important branch of the State service, then the only course open was to separate the two. A progressive Government should always respond to the advanced views of reformers, and if it was not done, dangerous results were likely to

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